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SUBJECT: TRAVEL WARNING: PHILIPPINES

¶1. The State Department warns U.S. citizens of the risks of travel to the southern Philippine islands of Mindanao and the Sulu Archipelago and urges extreme caution if traveling there. This replaces the Travel Warning dated January 29, 2009, to reflect continuing threats due to terrorist and insurgent activities.

¶2. Travelers should exercise extreme caution if traveling in the central and western portions of the island of Mindanao, as well as in the islands of the Sulu Archipelago. Regional terrorist groups have carried out bombings resulting in injuries and death. Since August 2008, there have been sporadic clashes between lawless groups and the Philippine Armed Forces in the Mindanao provinces of North Cotabato, Lanao del Sur and Lanao del Norte, as well as the Sulu Archipelago. Kidnap-for-ransom gangs are active and have targeted foreigners. U.S. Government employees must seek special permission for travel to Mindanao or the Sulu Archipelago. Travelers to these areas should remain vigilant and avoid congregating in public areas. Some foreigners who reside in or visit Mindanao and the Sulu Archipelago hire their own security.

¶3. The Department of State remains concerned about the continuing threat of terrorist actions and violence against U.S. citizens and interests throughout the world. The Worldwide Caution reminds U.S. citizens that terrorism can occur anywhere.

¶4. The Department strongly encourages U.S. citizens in the Philippines to register with the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy in Manila through the State Department's travel registration website. The U.S. Embassy is located at: 1201 Roxas Boulevard, Manila, Philippines, tel. 63-2-301-2000. The American Citizens Services (ACS) section's

fax number is 63-2-301-2017 and the ACS web page can be accessed online.

¶5. For information on general crime and security issues, U.S. citizens should also consult the Department of State's Country Specific Information for the Philippines and the Worldwide Caution, located at the Department of State's Bureau of Consular Affairs website. U.S. citizens may also obtain up-to-date information on security conditions by calling 1-888-407-4747 from the United States and Canada, or 202-501-4444 from overseas.

¶6. Minimize considered.

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